

REMARKS

The Final Office Action mailed November 7, 2006, has been received and reviewed. Claims 1, 4 through 6, 8 through 15, and 17 through 19 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 4, 14 and 15 stand rejected. Claims 5, 6, 8 through 13, and 17 through 19 are allowed. Applicants propose to cancel claims 4 and 15, to amend claim 1, and respectfully request reconsideration of the application as proposed to be amended herein.

No new matter has been added, support for the proposed amendments being found in the specification as filed in at least paragraphs [0025] through [0029], and the drawings.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Obviousness Rejections

Obviousness Rejection Based on U.S. Patent No. 5,709,910 to Argyle et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,285,668 to Pepe

Claims 1, 4 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Argyle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,709,910) in view of Pepe (U.S. Patent No. 4,285,668). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as hereinafter set forth.

M.P.E.P. 706.02(j) sets forth the standard for a Section 103(a) rejection:

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, **the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations.** The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). (Emphasis added).

Claims 4 and 15 are proposed to be canceled, rendering the rejection moot with respect thereto.

Claim 1 is proposed to be amended to remove the limitation that the adjustable baffle apertures of the first and second baffles of the processing chamber are "non-equidimensional" in light of the Examiner's detailed comments in the rejection, and to insert that the baffle adjustable apertures are "sizable and configurable" to accept "differently sized and shaped substrates of substantially matching, but slightly smaller, cross-section." (emphasis added). This amendatory language is similar to that suggested by the Examiner in the context of claim 19, and is believed

to patentably distinguish Applicants' invention from the combination of Argyle et al. in view of Pepe. Specifically, there is no teaching or suggestion of the claim limitations in the combination of references.

Further, Applicants propose to amend claim 1 by reciting that the entry seal baffle aperture is similarly adjustable in size and configuration, and to add the subject matter of claim 4, proposed to be canceled with, again, the limitation that the exit seal baffle apertures is adjustable in size and configuration. Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Argyle et al. with Pepe fails to teach or suggest the claimed combination of first and second baffles having first and second adjustable (in size and configuration) apertures separating first and second regions from a constricted medial region, in combination with entry and exit seals having baffles with adjustable (in size and configuration) apertures and respectively communicating with the first and second regions of the processing chamber. In addition, there is no teaching or suggestion of entry and exit seals *per se* having apertures adjustable in size and configuration.

Accordingly, claim 1, as proposed to be amended, is allowable.

Obviousness Rejection Based on U.S. Patent No. 5,709,910 to Argyle et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,285,668 to Pepe and U.S. Patent No. 2,545,576 to Godley

Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Argyle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,709,910) in view of Pepe (U.S. Patent No. 4,285,668) and Godley (U.S. Patent No. 2,545,576).

Claim 14 is allowable as depending from claim 1, as proposed to be amended herein.

ENTRY OF AMENDMENTS

The proposed amendment to claims 1 above should be entered by the Examiner because the amendments are supported by the as-filed specification (see at least paragraphs [0025] through [0029]) and drawings and do not add any new matter to the application. Further, the amendments do not raise new issues or require a further search, as the Examiner has already considered (and actually suggested as patentable) similar claim language in the context of claim 19. Finally, if the Examiner determines that the amendments do not place the application in condition for allowance, entry is respectfully requested upon filing of a Notice of Appeal herein.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1, 5, 6, 8-14 and 17-19 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner determine that additional issues remain which might be resolved by a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

/Stephen R. Christian/

Stephen R. Christian
Registration No. 32,687
Attorney for Applicants
P.O. Box 1625
Idaho Falls, ID 83415-3899
Phone: (208) 526-9140
Fax: (208) 526-8339

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